

Project Note

Date: March 1, 2002

To: Standard Chlorine Site file

From: Kristin Dobinson, Pre-Remedial Section, U.S. EPA



Subject: **Hackensack River Keeper**

Phone conversation with Captain Bill Sheehan, Hackensack River Keeper, regarding Standard Chlorine and the Hackensack River.

Captain Sheehan stated that Standard Chlorine is the most contaminated site he has ever seen. When he leaves the river area near the site he feels physically ill (nauseous). The site literally stinks. The southern ditch is visibly green. He can see the chrome in the shoreline that has eroded.

He has never regularly monitored the site, but is sure that runoff from the site flows into the river during large storms. He has seen flooding of the site.

Nothing grows on the site except some plants that will grow to two feet and then die.

The most popular area to fish in the Meadowlands is located approximately 0.10 miles upstream of the site on the Kearny dike. The dike is located between Standard Chlorine and the Kearny side of the NJ Turnpike. Captain Sheehan stated that he does know some catch and release fishermen who use this dike, but also is sure that families come to fish for food here despite the ban on fish consumption. He offered to take me out on a boat tour of the area in mid to end of April to show me the site from the river and this fishing area.

I asked if he knew of any endangered or threatened species that use the area near the site. He stated that they have had a lot of Peregrine falcons in the area but that they have been delisted from the endangered species list. Osprey migrate through the Meadowlands but do not nest there. They do use the river as a food source. Great blue heron also use the river. Captain Sheehan said that there are 265 species of birds that migrate through the Meadowlands. 63 species nest in the Meadowlands. Several of these are species of concern. He recommended speaking to the US Fish and Wildlife Service at their Pleasantville office. Cliff Day is the director there. Captain Sheehan also recommended speaking to the NJ Meadowlands Commission for information regarding fish in the Hackensack. They have a partnership with Rutgers through MERI, the Meadowlands Environmental Research Institute. Last year a fish inventory was conducted for the river. There are also at least 7 species of fish in the river that have management plans through NMFS (National Marine Fisheries Service) thereby making the river Essential Fish Habitat. Some of these species include striped bass, blue fish, 2 species of flounder, and week fish. He suggested speaking with Scott Bragin.

Captain Sheehan said to speak with Hugh Carrolla to arrange the tour.



